defence and military related visits, ship visits and joint or coordinated maritime patrolling in common or contiguous waters, and occasional material assistance.

(c) A Defence Cooperation Agreement proposed by Sri Lanka has been under the consideration of the Government. No decision on its conclusion and signature has been taken by the Government as yet.

World record by Indian pilots

† 266. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian pilots participating in the recent Indo-French joint *air* exercise have set a world record during India-Paris flight;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what way Government are considering to honour the pilots for setting the record?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Indian Air Force fighters and air to air refueling aircraft participated in the joint Indo-French air exercise from 15th to 30th June, 2005. However, no world record was established during the India-Paris flight.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Agreement on US-India defence relationship

267. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agreement signed on the US-India defence relationship during June, 2005 consist co-production of defence equipment and clauses to collaborate in multinational operations;

(b) if so, whether there is any commitment on lifting the curbs on supply of high technology to India;

(c) if so, whether the above agreement will lead to open market for US weaponry to India;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, whether the above agreement envisages the deployment of Indian troops in undefined U.S. led multinational operations regardless it is authorized by the United Nations or not; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE). (a) to (e) The 'New Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship' signed on June 28,2005 includes provisions for co-production of defence equipment and collaboration in multi-national operations "when it is in their common interest".

The 'Frame Work' provides for increased opportunities for a two-way defence trade and transactions, including technology transfer, collaboration, co-production, and research and development and the setting up of a 'Defence Procurement and Production Group' under the US-India Defence Policy Group (DPG) to advance these objectives. Together with progress on the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), the 'Framework, is expected to open the way for the supply of advanced technologies, including defence technologies, to India.

The 'Framework' is expected to add the United States to our existing sources of defence equipment suppliers and increase India's options and bargaining power in the acquisition of defence technology and equipment.

There is no proposal to deploy Indian troops.

Reduction of minimum period for discharging Defence Personnel

268. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to reduce the minimum period for discharging defence personnel after ten years of their enrolment; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.